



ARIZONA STATE SENATE
Fifty-Second Legislature, Second Regular Session

FACT SHEET FOR S.B. 1313

teachers; alternative certification application

Purpose

Allows *A* and *B* school districts and charter schools to apply for the authority to approve the alternative certification of teachers.

Background

The State Board of Education (SBE) supervises and controls the certification of persons directly or indirectly engaged in instructional work, including teachers, supervisory teachers, speech therapists, principals or superintendents in a school district, school district preschool program or any other elementary and secondary educational institution (A.R.S. § 15-203). Currently, there are four full-time teacher certificates: provisional, standard, emergency and intern. All certificates require a Bachelor's Degree and a valid fingerprint clearance card in addition to other specifications. However, to qualify for either a basic or standard teaching certificate, or equivalent certificate later adopted by SBE, a person must pass each component of the proficiency examination developed and administered by SBE. The proficiency examination consists of a professional knowledge test and a subject knowledge test (A.R.S. § 15-533). In 2006, SBE established an alternative teacher development program to accelerate the process of identifying, training and placing highly qualified individuals into low-income schools.

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Allows a school district or charter school that has received a letter grade of *A* or *B* for each of the preceding three years to apply to SBE for the authority to approve the alternative certification of teachers.
2. Requires SBE to adopt rules, policies and procedures to be administered at the direction of SBE.
3. Requires the rules to not be more restrictive or require more than is prescribed and to provide for the following:
 - a) requires the superintendent of a school district or principal of a charter school to verify that the applicant for alternative certification has made satisfactory progress and achievement with students;

- b) requires a school district or charter school to submit data supporting the efficacy of the school district's or charter school's teacher training program before receiving authority to approve alternative certifications;
- c) prohibits a teacher from receiving a certificate until the teacher has been in the classroom for at least one full year and student data has been submitted by the school district or charter school confirming that 80 percent of the teacher's students at the end of the school year either are performing at grade level or have achieved at least one year of academic growth;
- d) allows a school district or charter school to adopt student achievement requirements that exceed the student achievement requirements prescribed by SBE for obtaining alternative certification;
- e) requires the assessment data used to demonstrate student achievement to be from an assessment approved by SBE;
- f) requires an applicant for alternative certification to hold at least a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited university and meet background and fingerprint clearance card requirements;
- g) directs a school district or charter school that has been granted the authority to approve the alternative certification of teachers to submit evidence each year that high quality teachers are equally distributed across all schools within the school district or within the charter school;
- h) issues a standard teaching certificate on the submission of the verification of requirements from the school district or charter school; and
- i) allows, for untested grades and subjects, a school district or charter school to submit data from a nationally recognized norm-referenced or criterion-referenced test conforming that at least 80 percent of the teacher's students at the end of the school year either are performing at a grade level or have achieved at least one year of academic growth.

4. Becomes effective on general effective date.

Prepared by Senate Research

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